

Power Panther Takes Eat Smart. Play Hard.TM To Schools

Background Information for Presenters



Eat Smart. Play Hard.TM is about making America's children healthier. It's about practical suggestions that will help you motivate children and their caregivers to eat healthy and be active. The Eat Smart. Play Hard.TM Campaign messages and materials are fun for children and informative for caregivers. To make your job easier, this ready-to-use script contains messages based on the Food and Nutrition Service's cross-program Eat Smart. Play Hard.TM campaign. With the assistance of a "helper", Power Panther comes alive during your local and school events.

Target audience: 8-10 year old tweens (but may also be used for a wider school-age audience)

Examples of events: In-room appearance, school assembly, or after school programs

Materials Needed

- Music player (e.g., stereo or boom box)
- Eat Smart. Play Hard.TM songs:
 - Power Panther is Here
 - If You Wanna Be Like the Power Panther
- Piece of fruit or bowl of fruit (so it can be seen by large audience)
- Poster of Slurp

Power Panther "moves" may also be integrated into your program. The following moves are included in the script below to reinforce campaign messages.

- Healthy eating:
 - holds a piece of fruit up in one hand and makes a thumbs-up gesture with the other
 - distributes healthy snacks (optional)
- Physical activity:
 - dances or moves to music
 - tosses a ball
 - does calisthenics
 - strength/power - makes a muscle or holds fists and lifts arms overhead
- Other moves:
 - waves hello
 - shakes hands with helper and audience
 - nods in agreement

- gestures to audience e.g. thumbs-up

Script:

Background music: "If You Wanna Be Like the Power Panther"

Introducing Power Panther

Helper: "Today we've invited a very special and exciting friend, Power Panther to visit with us. Some of you may have met him before but I'd like to introduce him to all of you. Power Panther is a panther after all and can't speak with words, but he definitely knows how to communicate – especially about helping kids learn how to Eat Smarter and Move More! Panther please say hello to the audience."

Power Panther: Waves hello, and shake hands with the helper and audience.

Helper: "Power Panther has traveled over 500,000 miles across the country to meet school kids like you and to talk about eating healthy and being physically active. Everybody say a big "hello, Power Panther!"

Eat Smart. Play Hard – and being Powerful

Power Panther: Walks to center of the stage or room and points to his Eat Smart. Play Hard T-shirt and flexes his bicep with a fisted power glove to suggest power/strength.

Helper: "Power Panther loves to speak to kids like you and has a message he would like to share: Eat Smart. Play Hard. Do you know what that means? (*Waits for audience responses*) "It means eating healthy meals and snacks, and making sure you do fun active things like playing basketball or moving to music on a regular basis. Power Panther says you have the power within yourself to make healthy choices every day. If you eat smart and play hard, you can be as powerful as him."

Power Panther: Gives a "thumbs up" to the helper and makes a muscle or holds fists and lifts arms overhead to show strength.

Helper: "Do you know what the pyramid on Power Panther's T-shirt means?" (Power Panther turns around to show MyPyramid). (*Waits for audience responses*) "It shows us how to eat healthy, in the right amounts from all the food groups."

Power Panther: Power Panther holds a piece of fruit up in one hand and gives the thumbs-up gesture with the other

Helper: “Power Panther wants to ask you about breakfast. Do you know why breakfast is important?” (*Waits for audience responses*)
“Eating breakfast will not only make you feel good and powerful, it will give you energy, and help you be more alert so you’ll do better in school. It will also give you nutrients to help you grow. Power Panther’s message to you is, “Power Up With Breakfast.”

Power Panther: Pulls out a banana or a box of generic cereal from his bag and holds it up to the audience.

Physical Activity

Helper: “Why is physical activity important?” (*Waits for audience responses*). “Being physically active is good for your health, builds strong bones and muscles, helps you feel more energetic, and makes you strong”.

Power Panther: Makes a muscle.

Helper: “Power Panther says we should move more and sit less. Power Panther says that fun physical activities can be part of your daily routine with friends or family. Did you know that Power Panther and his nephew Slurp play basketball together or go on walks around the neighborhood most days of the week? (Power Panther or helper pulls out a poster of Slurp) “Who can name some other great physical activities you could do every day? (Examples of responses: bike riding, all sports, walking, running, active games like dodge ball, hiking, working out.)

“Let’s join Power Panther in making a muscle to show how strong we can get with physical activity.” [Or do a planned physical activity such as simple guided calisthenics such as touching toes, stretching arms in air, and side bends.]

More about Power Panther

Power Panther: gestures, pointing to himself.

Helper: “Power Panther wants me to tell you about him. His favorite activities are walking, running, and biking. He’s also very fast and powerful, can jump as high as a tractor-trailer and can climb trees when he needs to. He’ll share a secret with you – he keeps his

energy level up by starting the day with a healthy breakfast. He also keeps fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk and yogurt, and whole wheat crackers handy because they make great snacks.”

Power Panther: Nods in agreement, gives the thumbs up with one hand and pats his stomach with the other.

Helper: “Do you want to know more about Power Panther?” (Waits for audience responses.) “He likes doing activities with friends and he always shares his snacks with them. Would you like to play/dance/eat with him today?” [This is a cue for a planned Power Panther activity such as more simple calisthenics, or distribution of healthy snacks.]

Resume music: Power Panther leads audience in calisthenics and/or distributing healthy snacks.

